

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

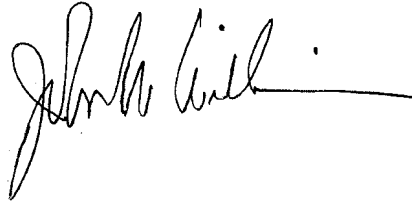
Farm Service Agency
Washington DC 20250

Notice IRM-342

For: State Offices

Cellular Communications Authority

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

Cellular telephones used as business tools increase productivity while commuting to and from work and between business destinations. Using cellular devices for SED's and DD's who are required to travel extensively has been under consideration and is now approved by the National Office.

FSA, ITSD, Telecommunications and Security Center (TSC) – Network Analysis Office (NAO) researched numerous cellular plans based on usage requirements set forth by the National Office.

B Purpose

This notice informs and instructs State Offices on:

- purchasing cellular telecommunications equipment and service plans
- selecting cellular telecommunications optional features
- billing instructions.

C Contact

For questions about this notice, contact Bobbie Budgett by:

- e-mail at **bjbudgett@kcc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 816-926-6465.

Disposal Date	Distribution
May 1, 2004	State Offices

2 Authorities

A Cellular Telephones for SED's and DD's

SED's have authority to purchase cellular telephone equipment and service plans for themselves and DD's to be used for official government business. In addition, SED's are authorized to purchase 1 additional unit per State to be used when needed for other office personnel.

Cellular telephone use is subject to the same restrictions and guidelines that apply to all FSA telephones according to 5-IRM and DR3300-1.

B Guidelines for Acquiring Cellular Telephones and Service Plans

SED's shall acquire the most cost-effective cellular telephone and service plan available in their area. Use the following guidelines, set forth by DAFO:

- recommended 12 hour usage minimum per week per phone
- caller ID
- free long distance
- voice mail
- call detail billing
- billing address will be FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO
- review billing invoice through the Teltrak Web site
- free roaming service
- no Internet access.

Where there is an existing service plan, SED's shall review and compare the existing service plan with other provider service plans and determine the most cost-effective plan. Based on their findings, SED's may cancel or upgrade the existing service plan.

Cost of equipment, activation, and monthly recurring costs will be processed according to subparagraph 3 C.

3 Purchasing Instructions

A Consider Federal Wireless Telecommunications Services (FWTS) and Local Vendors

SED's should carefully consider the following information when selecting vendors and service plans.

- Consider service plans that offer at least 12 hours of anytime airtime per week per phone at a fixed dollar amount, because they may be less expensive than plans that charge straight fees per call and/or per minute.
- Compare the best options in your area with GSA, if available. GSA, under the Office of the Federal Telecommunications Service, provides FWTS. FWTS provides nationwide cellular service and equipment, including cellular telephones. Call FWTS customer service toll-free at 1-888-333-9473.
- Cellular service plans should include the following features with **no additional costs**:
 - caller ID
 - long distance
 - voice mail
 - call detail billing
 - roaming.
- Cellular service plans should not include Internet access (using the cellular telephones internal web browser).
- Service provider should have the capability to mail billing invoice to another office and not the servicing office.
- Limit equipment, features, and accessories to only those required to complete government business. Features and accessories may include items such as desktop chargers, car battery chargers, hands free equipment, and carrying cases. More expensive models with optional features and accessories shall not be purchased when less expensive models will suffice.
- Some cellular telephones offer paging services at little or no additional expense and should be included, if available. This may reduce the number of cellular minutes and telephone calls since users have the option of waiting to return a call by using a less expensive means other than accepting or placing a cellular telephone call.

3 Purchasing Instructions (Continued)

B Pricing

Under the GSA/FWTS contract, Federal agencies can purchase cellular products and services directly, without long lead times. FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO reviewed a variety of service plans in their geographical area. The following are examples of several service plan prices from various service providers. Pricing may vary for your location.

- T Mobile (Voice Stream) with 5,000 anytime minutes per month for \$99.99.
- Sprint PCS with 2,500 anytime minutes per month for \$100.00 or unlimited minutes for \$110.00.
- Cingular with 2,000 anytime minutes per month for \$199.99.
- Verizon with 3,000 anytime/anywhere minutes per month for \$300.00.
- AT&T Cellular with 3,200 anytime minutes per month for \$199.99, plus roaming for \$.69 per minute.

Note: This plan is **not** recommended because of the roaming fees.

3 Purchasing Instructions (Continued)

C Acquisition Procedures

SED's shall:

- consider at least 3 sources for orders exceeding the micro-purchase threshold
- for purchasing other than those authorized in subparagraph 2 A, forward all cellular telephone equipment purchase requests to DAFO for consideration
- FAX all AD-700's for cellular equipment purchases and related activation fees to FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO, Attn.: Becki Schreckenghaust, at 816-926-1982.

Upon receiving AD-700, FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO will add the appropriate fund code, budget object class code, accounting code, and FAX completed AD-700 to the State Office for processing.

Note: An accounting classification code provided for cellular request is **not** a blanket approval and will be used for the approved request only. Additionally, the approved purchase may be acquired only during FY in which the funds are approved.

When the field office receives the completed AD-700, they will purchase the required item(s) with AD-838 and send a copy to FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO.

D Alternate Acquisition Method

If the vendor will not accept AD-838, the field office shall contact their Designated Agency Representative (DAR) and request permission to use the following alternate acquisition method.

Upon receiving the completed AD-700 and approval to use the alternate acquisition procedure, the field office may purchase the required item(s) with a State Office Government Purchase Card (**not** Government Travel Card) and provide FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO with a copy of AD-700. The following information must be provided in the description area of AD-700, item 14:

Order Processed by Purchase Card:

Vendor Name _____
Estimated Delivery Date _____
Total Cost \$ _____
Buyer's Initials/Date _____

3 Purchasing Instructions (Continued)

D Alternate Acquisition Method (Continued)

Notes: The buyer will provide a copy of a Purchase Card Management System (PCMS) Report or a copy of the PCMS Transaction Maintenance Screen to provide proof of proper accounting reconciliation within 1 month of the purchase.

FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO will provide periodic reports for all purchases to the National Office, ITSD.

E Billing Procedures

SED's shall:

- have all billing invoices mailed to the following:

FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO
6501 BEACON DRIVE
MAIL STOP 8288
KANSAS CITY, MO 64133-4676

Note: Service agreements shall not be paid in advance. All service agreement invoices will be received and reviewed for accuracy by FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO personnel. FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO will forward invoices for payment to NFC.

- review billing invoice through the Teltrak Web site when available
- report all identified waste, fraud, and/or abuse to DAFO.

Cellular users may review individual billing invoices by contacting their SED.

3 Purchasing Instructions (Continued)

E Inventory

For inventory purposes, the State Offices shall maintain the following records for each device acquired and forward information to FSA/ITSD/TSC-NAO:

- name of vendor
- assigned cellular telephone number
- signed copy of the agreement between the agency and the vendor.

Biannually, SED's should also confirm inventory as described in Notice IRM-326 by accessing the TelTrak Confirmation Web site as follows.

Step	Action
1	Access the TelTrak Confirmation Web site at http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/teltrak/default.htm
2	Select "Confirm Telecommunications Inventory Data".
3	Select the pertinent FSA State abbreviation, and PRESS "Submit".
4	Find the pertinent site or county name, and click on an underlined report on the same line as county or site name.
5	Review the information on the page. If there is no information on the page for a particular report type and if there are no additions, send a confirmation that all information for each report type is correct.
6	Click on the pertinent State abbreviation to send an e-mail confirmation. To suggest changes and/or additions to the page, print out the page, make pen and ink changes on the page or mark the page "OK", and mail or FAX the page to the appropriate DAR for your State.
7	Repeat steps 3 through 5 for each report for the site for which telecommunications services are being confirmed.

3 Purchasing Instructions (Continued)

F Contacts

DAR's for each State are as follows.

Area	Contact Name	Contact Phone Number
Northeast CT, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, WV	Bobbie Budgett	816-926-6465
Northwest AK, ID, MT, NE, ND, OR, SD, WA, WY	Horace Gorton Ron Rockel	816-926-3478 816-823-1540
Midwest IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI	Dianne Hord Patrice Bryant	816-926-6013 816-926-3786
Southeast AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, PR, SC, TN, VA,	Joe Avila	816-823-1960
Southwest AZ, CA, CO, HI, KS, NM, NV, OK, TX, UT	Becki Schreckenghaust Lynn Oliphant	816-926-5028 816-926-1395